

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

SUBJECT: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

1. PANAMA: SOVIET ARMS OR POLITICAL CHARMS?

THE PANAMANIAN PRESS HAS GIVEN PLAY TO THE VISIT BY A PANAMANIAN MILITARY DELEGATION TO CUBATO VIEW DEMONSTRATIONS OF A WIDE ARRAY OF SOVIET ARMS BY CUBAN MILITARY FORCES. THE OFFICIALLY STATED PURPOSE OF THE VISIT IS TO STRENGTHEN RELATIONS BETWEEN THE PANAMANIAN AND CUBAN MILITARY.

EMBASSY COMMENT: WHILE NO INDICATION HAS BEEN GIVEN OF ANY PLANS TO BUY SOVIET ARMS, THE INTENT APPEARS TO BE AIMED AT SHORING UP TORRIJOS' SAGGING IMAGE AS A REVOLUTIONARY AND STEMMING THE EROSION OF SUPPORT FOR TORRIJOS FROM THE LEFT-IST PART OF HIS COALITION. (CONFIDENTIAL) PANAMA 6377, 10/17.)

2. ARGENTINA: PERON RALLY PEACEFUL, PERON SPEECH

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PREDICTABLE

MRS. PERON IN HER ADDRESS OCTOBER 17 BEFORE A CROWD OF 50,000 STRESSED PERONIST UNITY, URGED AN ALL OUT FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM, AND ANNOUNCED THAT THERE WOULD BE NO WAGE

INCREASES. DESPITE LEFT WING GUERRILLA THREATS TO DYNAMITE THE CROWD, THE RALLY WAS CARRIED OFF PEACEFULLY, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE EXPLOSION OF SEVERAL SMALL NOISE BOMBS. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE) BUENOS AIRES 6917, 10/17.)

3. SPANISH SAHARA

A. SPAIN SEEKS DECISIVE UN ACTION

AT HIS REQUEST, SPANISH AMBASSADOR TO THE UN DE PINIES MET WITH AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN TO EXPRESS HIS GOVERNMENT'S CONCERN THAT THE THREATENED INVASION OF THE SPANISH SAHARA BY MOROCCAN CIVILIANS WOULD PLACE THE SPANISH AUTHORITIES IN THE TERRITORY IN A DANGEROUS AND PERHAPS UNTENABLE POSITION. DE PINIES BELIEVES A DUAL APPROACH BY THE UN MUST BE URGENTLY UNDERTAKEN:

--THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF 24 SHOULD BE TAKEN UP IMMEDIATELY IN THE FOURTH COMMITTEE SO THAT THE "DECOLONIZATION PROCESS" CAN BE DEALT WITH IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY CONTEXT; AND,

--THE SECURITY COUNCIL SHOULD FOCUS ON THE THREAT TO INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY UNDER ARTICLES 34, 35, AND 73.

DE PINIES URGED AT AN OCTOBER 16 PRESS CONFERENCE THAT THE SECURITY COUNCIL USE FORCE SHOULD THE SITUATION DETERIORATE.

B. MOROCCO'S KING HASSAN URGES MASS SUPPORT FOR MARCH

KING HASSAN OCTOBER 16 MADE A STRONG EMOTIONAL APPEAL TO HIS PEOPLE TO SUPPORT THE MARCH ON SPANISH SAHARA. ONLY TWO POLITICAL PARTIES HAVE SO FAR REACTED PUBLICLY TO THE SPEECH.

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EMBASSY COMMENT: OUR INITCEL IMPRESSION IS THAT, FOR THE MOMENT, THERE IS GENUINE POPULAR SUPPORT FOR THE MARCH, ALTHOUGH THERE HAS BEEN AS YET LITTLE MOVEMENT SOUTHWARD OF CIVILIANS. THE WARNING IN THE KING' SPEECH THAT THE MARCH WOULD BE OPPOSED BY NON-SPANISH "FOREIGN ELEMENTS" WAS UNDOUBTEDLY AIMED AT ALGERIA AND F POLISARIO.

C. MAURITANIANS REACT FAVORABLY TO ICJ DECISION

MAURITANIA'S NATIONAL POLITICAL BUREAU (BPN), CHAIRED BY PREUIDENT OULD DADDAH, HELD AN EXTRAORDINARY SESSION TO DISCUSS THE ICJ ADVISORY OPINION AND ISSUED A STATEMENT NOTING THAT THE DECISION CONFIRMS MAURITANIA'S LEGITIMATE POSITION

ON THE SAHARA AND ITS POLICY OVER THE PAST 18 YEARS FOR RECOVERING ITS RIGHTS THROUGH REUNIFICATION OF ITS TERRITORY. THE BPN INVITED THE POPULACE TO CLOSE RANKS AND MOBILIZE FOR PERFECTING ITS INDEPENDENCE.

EMBASSY COMMENT: WE SEE VIRTUALLY NO POSSIBILITY THAT THE MAURITANIANS WILL TRY TO MARCH PEACEFUL HORDES OR TROOPS INTO THE SPANISH SAHARA. (CONFIDENTIAL) USUN 5115; (UNCLASSIFIED) USUN 5106; (CONFIDENTIAL) RABAT 4996 AND (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE) NOUAKCHOTT 2123, 10/17.)

4. GUATEMALA/BELIZE DISPUTE

A. A WAY OUT

AMBASSADOR MELOY REPORTS THAT IN A MEETING OCTOBER 16 GUATEMALAN FOREIGN MINISTER MOLINA STATED THAT IT IS STILL THE GOG'S WISH TO REFER ITS DISPUTE WITH BELIZE TO THE ICJ AND THAT GUATEMALA WOULD ACCEPT AS BINDING A DECISION OF THE COURT. MOLINA COMMENTED THAT HE DID NOT THINK GUATEMALA HAD MUCH CHANCE OF OBTAINING A FAVORABLE DECISION, BUT THE REFERRAL WOULD BE "A WAY OUT" AND COULD BE PRESENTED AS DISCHARGING THE CONSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GOVERNMENT REGARDING BELIZE.

AMBASSADOR'S COMMENT: ANY KIND OF SOLUTION WHICH MAY EMERGE FROM THE UNGA IS LIKELY TO BE CONSIDERED AN AFFRONT BY GUATEMALA.

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GUATEMALA. SUBMISSION OF THE DISPUTE TO THE ICJ OFFERS OUR BEST HOPE OF AVERTING A POTENTIALLY DISASTROUS CONFRONTATION. (CONFIDENTIAL) GUATEMALA 5755 (EXDIS), 10/17.)

B. UK OPPOSES SUBMISSION TO THE ICJ

A BRITISH EMBASSY OFFICIAL IN WASHINGTON MET WITH DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS OCTOBER 17 AND STATED THAT HMG HAS RECONSIDERED ITS POSITION AND IS NOW AGAINST SUBMITTING THE GUATEMALA-BELIZE DISPUTE TO THE ICJ. THE BRITISH ARE SUPPORTED BY THE BELIZEANS, WHO ARE UNWILLING TO RISK A DECISION FAVORABLE TO GUATEMALA. THE EMBASSY OFFICIAL ADDED:

--UKUN WILL PROPOSE A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR CONTINUED NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE UK AND GUATEMALA BUT WILL

BLOCK ANY STRONGER RESOLUTION.

--THE UK HAS TAKEN THE DECISION TO REINFORCE THE BELIZE
GARRISON IF AND WHEN IT PROVES NECESSARY. (SECRET)
STATE 247553, 10/17.)

5. PRC'S EMERGING POLICY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

CONSULATE GENERAL HONG KONG REPORTS THAT PEKING'S BASIC
SOUTHEAST ASIAN POLICY HAS CHANGED LITTLE IN THE AFTERMATH
OF THE US MILITARY WITHDRAWAL. THE PRC'S OWN SECURITY IS
STILL ITS PARAMOUNT CONCERN AND ITS MAJOR OBJECTIVES IN THE
REGION ARE:

--COMPETING WITH THE SOVIETS FOR INFLUENCE WITH THE
GOVERNMENTS IN THE AREA.

--ENSURING THAT HANOI DOES NOT BECOME OVERLY IDENTIFIED
WITH OR CONTROLLED BY THE SOVIETS;

--CONTINUING ITS DOMINANCE OVER SEA INSURGENT MOVE-
MENTS.

PEKING IS ATTEMPTING TO BALANCE ITS HISTORICAL ROLE AS IDEO-
LOGICAL MOTHER HEN TO INSURGENT MOVEMENTS WITH ITS PERCEIVED
NEED TO CULTIVATE NORMAL RELATIONS WITH ESTABLISHED SEA GOV-
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MOVEMENTS TO OFFSET SOVIET INFLUENCE.

STILL UNCERTAIN OVER HANOI'S INTENTIONS, PEKING IS TRYING TO
MAINTAIN FRIENDLY RELATIONS BUT HAS WARNED HANOI AGAINST
OVER IDENTIFYING WITH MOSCOW. TO A LARGE EXTENT, SEA NA-
TIONS NOW VIEW PEKING AS A MODERATING INFLUENCE ON HANOI.

CONSULATE COMMENT: DESPITE GROWING CONCERN OVER HANOI'S
AMBITIONS, PEKING'S DICHOTOMOUS STATE TO STATE AND PARTY TO
PARTY RELATIONSHIPS IN THE AREA ARE PAHING OFF. ALTHOUGH
PEKING'S NOW MUTED SUPPORT FOR INSURGENT MOVEMENTS PROBABLY
DOES NOT REFLECT A LONG TERM POLICY CHANGE AT PRESENT. IT
DOES INDICATE A GROWING INTEREST IN REGIONAL STABILITY. THE
EXTENT TO WHICH THE OTHER STATES CAN ENCOURAGE THIS TREND
COULD HELP DETERMINE PRC POLICY OVER THE LONGER RUN. (CON-
FIDENTIAL) HONG KONG 12216, 10/16.) INGERSOLL

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